

METHOD CLAIMS

49. A method of doing business comprising auctioning professional service time on the web.

50. A method of fund-raising comprising auctioning teleconference time with celebrities on the web, automatically calling high bidders and connecting them to said teleconference, and automatically billing teleconference participants the amounts they bid to be on said teleconference.

51. A method for placing conferenced multiple outbound telephone calls, comprising:

- a. An receiving dialing information over the internet;
- b. placing a plurality of outbound telephone calls in response to said dialing information;
- c. connecting said multiple outbound calls together as a conference call.

52. The method of claim 51, further comprising serving up a web page of account information and calling options in response to web packets containing URL and cookie information.

53. The method of claim 51 wherein said conferencing connection is done through on-premises telephony equipment.

54. The method of claim 51 wherein the connecting of said outbound calls further comprises sending digital network commands to a telephone carrier switch to offload and maintain the connection.

55. The method of claim 51, further comprising storing customer information in a database.

56. The method of claim 51, wherein:

a. Monitoring call progress to detect connection to called parties;

b. dialing at least two customers based on said dialing information;

c. dialing other parties only after a first party has been dialed and successfully connected to.

57. The method of claim 55, wherein a call between a call-initiating party and a call-receiving party is only set up only if information in said database indicates that said call-initiating party is allowed to contact a call-receiving party.

58. The method of claim 57, further comprising checking allowed contact time window criteria in said database set up by said call-receiving party regarding said call-initiating party, and only placing said conferenced outbound calls if said call time falls within said allowed contact time criteria.

59. The method of claim 57, further comprising checking allowed group contact criteria if said dialing information indicates that said call-initiating party is initiating said call as a member of a call-enabled group, and placing said call only if said group is currently contact-enabled by said call-receiving party.

60. The method of claim 59, wherein said calling information is indicative of both individual information and group information.

61. The method of claim 60, wherein said group must be currently enabled and said individual must not be currently disabled for said call-receiving party in order for said conferenced calls to be placed.

62. The method of claim 57, further comprising automatically prompting called parties for PIN-code information and checking PIN-code information entered by call-initiating and call-receiving parties on the telephone at the beginnings of their respectively received outbound calls against PIN-code information stored for said customers in said database, and considering said outbound calls connected only if proper PIN-code information is entered.

63. The method of claim 57, further comprising serving up customer information as a web page, and accepting customer modification of customer call setup and call-receiving parameters via the internet.

64. The method of claim 55, further comprising timing connected telephone calls and storing call durations in said database.

65. The method of claim 64, further comprising calculating call charges based on connection time, connection rates, and customer billability status.

66. The method of claim 65, wherein billability status may include fully billable status, split-billing status, or non-billable status.

67. The method of claim 65, wherein the billability status of each customer may be individually defined with respect to every other customer.

68. The method of claim 64, further comprising providing an audio call-length reminder a predetermined time after the beginning of a conferenced multiple outbound call.

69. The method of claim 68, further comprising automatically ending a conferenced call a predetermined time after it begins.

70. The method of claim 68, further comprising making the call-receiving party's phone look busy to other callers using the present invention when the call-initiating party is being called to be connected to the call-receiving party.

71. The method of claim 54, further comprising determining whether a line is busy through a digital query submitted through a telephone carrier digital network command interface.

72. The method of claim 62, further comprising automatically making conferenced outbound calls at times scheduled in advance in said database.

73. The method of claim 57, further comprising automatically playing to said call-receiving party at the beginning of a call an audio announcement identifying the other party to said call, and allowing said call recipient to cancel said call without being connected to said party.

74. The method of claim 73, further comprising automatically playing to said call-receiving party at the beginning of a call audio information about the time the call-initiating party last called.

75. The method of claim 57, further comprising playing to the call-receiving party at the beginning of a call an audio greeting in the call-receiving party's own voice.

76. The method of claim 57, further comprising playing to the call-receiving party at the beginning of a call a greeting in the voice of the call-initiating party, identifying the call-initiating party.

~~Method of claim~~